

**An investigation into the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in the Senior Phase of a Junior Secondary School in the Lusikisiki district, Eastern Cape.**

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**A research report submitted to the School of Education, University of KwaZulu- Natal, Edgewood, Durban in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education (Curriculum Studies).**

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## **ABSTRACT**

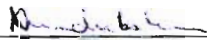
One of the changes that have occurred since 1994 in the education system was the move from content-based education to Outcomes Based Education in schools. This paradigm shift made most teachers to change their mindsets and implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms through applying the knowledge of principles underpinning the new curriculum; outcomes based teaching and learning theories and methods as well as assessment into practice.

The study investigates how Senior Phase Educators understand and implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms to prepare Grade 9 learners for entry to Grade 10. It aimed at examining teacher's theoretical understanding of Curriculum 2005 and identifying teaching, learning and assessment methods used by the teachers when implementing Curriculum 2005. This investigation was carried out through participant observation and questionnaires.

The main findings of the research revealed that the Senior Phase Educators in this school did not have a clear understanding of the theories and principles underpinning the curriculum although they knew that learners learn through discovering things themselves; teaching is integrated with assessment and across the Learning Areas. Ongoing assessment of learner activities was evident though there were challenges such as designing an assessment rubric. Teachers struggled to apply Curriculum 2005 knowledge in practice. Moreover, it became evident that Senior Phase Educators are using various learner-centred methods though these methods were superseded by teacher-centred methods, as they believed that they are lifesavers in overcrowded classrooms. The study further provides recommendations on what to be done to prepare Senior Phase Learners for entry to Grade 10.

## DECLARATION

I, hereby declare that this dissertation, except the acknowledged referenced citations, is my own work. It has not been submitted for any previous degree or examination at any university.

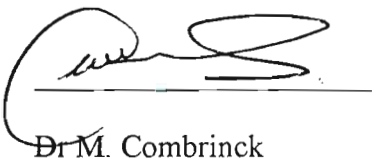


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April 2007

## **SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT**

This dissertation has been submitted with/ ~~without~~ my approval

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'C' followed by a series of loops and a final horizontal stroke. The signature is written above a solid horizontal line.

Dr M. Combrinck

April 2007

## **DEDICATION**

Special dedication to my mother Florence Vuyiswa Cingo and my husband Tembalihle Reuben Mdutshane for their encouragement at all times of my studies.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I am grateful to the principal and staff of this school without whom this research would not have been a success. I am also grateful to my supervisor, Dr M. Combrink for his assistance, guidance and support.

I would also like to convey my deepest gratitude to my children Kanya, Sihle, Lonwabo and Sisonke for their understanding at all times during studies.

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## **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **1.1 Introduction**

A theme to be investigated in this small-scale research is the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in one of the Junior Secondary Schools in Lusikisiki district. In this context (former Transkei) a Junior Secondary School is composed of Foundation Phase (Grade R-Grade 3), Intermediate Phase (Grade 4-Grade 6) and Senior Phase (Grade 7-Grade 9). The study will investigate how Senior Phase educators understand and implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms. It attempts to give a limited picture of what happened in schools prior to the implementation of Revised National Curriculum Statements. At the time of the study, schools are using Curriculum 2005. This research project will also investigate the methods of teaching and assessment used by Senior Phase educators in teaching and assessing learners in terms of Curriculum 2005. Changing from what one used to do to something new creates feelings of uncertainty and anxiety on whether to go for the new changes or not. Trying something new is better than folding arms or continuing with something that is against National Policies although it is not easy or possible to change overnight.

Van der Horst et al (1998) states that Curriculum 2005 is aiming at developing thinking and problem-solving citizens who will be empowered to participate in the country in an active and productive way. A move from the content and examination oriented curricula to problem solving, learner-centeredness, skills development and learning by doing will be desired to develop creative and critical problem solvers. This demands teachers to change their mind sets, that is, to move to a new way of thinking and to change their practices. Once they change their way of thinking, they will not see learners as empty jugs to be filled with knowledge but as learners who are willing to discover things on their own and who are willing to have more knowledge through teacher's guidance. Moreover, the attitude of teachers towards change will determine how well they make the policies work. For teachers to be able to implement the curriculum successfully, they need to develop the potential of each learner to the full. This will be achieved if they successfully implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms.

Knowledge of the theories and principles underpinning the curriculum contribute to the selection of teaching, learning and assessment methods to be used. Knowledge of theories and principles underpinning a curriculum are essential for planning, implementation and evaluation

of the teaching-learning process. They form basis for constructivism approach where learners will construct their own knowledge through interacting with the world. Although the curricular material tends to have a universal dimension, schools as learning communities should design out of it what they perceive to fit or suitable for their own cause. Choice of content, packaging and delivery as well as evaluation processes mediated or shaped by deliberated efforts through theories, principles, policies, manifestos, and acts inherent to that particular society. Good methods for structuring knowledge to result in simplifying the content, generating new ideas and increasing the manipulation of information. Learners need to be provided with hands-on learning. Teachers should be in a position to detect knowledge gaps and to be able to scaffold learners in the filling in of these gaps. In addition, they need to be in a position to identify and address (if possible) barriers to teaching and learning. This provides teachers with a degree of freedom to select the content and methods through which the learners will achieve the desired outcomes.

It is the view of Spady (1994, p.11) that the desired outcome is the starting point for curriculum, instruction and assessment planning and implementation all of which perfectly match. So therefore, teachers must be in a position to state the desired outcomes they want to achieve at the end of a learning experience as the starting point for instruction and assessment planning since the core business in learning communities is to help and guide learners to achieve the desired outcomes. For better improvement, teachers need to network with others so as to share information and to socially construct the curriculum with their learners. Sharing one's learning and ideas with others and collaborating with them in solving problems is an important part of being a change agent.

## **1.2 Context of the study**

This study focused on a single Junior Secondary School situated in the rural areas of Lusikisiki in the former Transkei, Eastern Cape. This school has a professional staff population of 14 teachers, made up of a principal, a deputy principal, 3 heads of department and 9 post- level one educators. All educators in this school are in possession of a 3-year diploma and 4 educators have university degrees obtained from South African universities. The school chosen for this study is near the researcher's work place to reduce the costs of travelling and to manage time effectively. The findings of this research will prove very valuable to this school towards improving the quality of teaching and assessment in the school because the findings

will be available to the school at the end of the research. The study was undertaken to find how successful Senior Phase educators are implementing Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms.

### **1.3 The focus of the study**

The main focus of the study was to conduct an investigation into the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in the Senior Phase of a Junior Secondary School in the Lusikisiki District. The following research questions informed the study.

- What are the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005?
- How do teachers understand and implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms?
- What methods do teachers use in teaching and assessing the learners in terms of Curriculum 2005?
- What are the implications of the findings for possible improvement and development?

### **1.4 Research methods**

In this study, the researcher will use both the quantitative and qualitative research methods in order to investigate how Senior Phase educators implement Curriculum 2005. A questionnaire will be designed to be distributed to Senior Phase educators with the view of establishing different opinions of the Senior Phase educators on how they implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms. Kidder et al (1986) is of the view that in a questionnaire, respondents answer in a relaxed atmosphere, taking their time and thus lead to well thought responses. Bias that may result from the presence of the interviewer or other respondents is easy to overcome since respondents respond privately. Moreover, confidentiality is easily honoured. Questionnaires will be administered to 14 Senior Phase educators. The questionnaire design will contain both closed and open-ended questions. The inclusion of both types will help in determining the frame of reference and responses from respondents. In addition, Schumacher et al (1993, p. 238) states that a questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardized questions, can ensure anonymity and questions can be written for specific purposes. Closed form items are best for obtaining demographic information and data that can be categorised easily. They save time get to the point and to relevant data. For Kendall et al (1988, p. 130) open ended questions include

putting the interviewee at ease, revealing avenues for further questioning that may have gone untapped and providing richness of detail. Because of the above mentioned advantages, the researcher thought that using a questionnaire would be the most effective and efficient way to gather information. Responses will be analysed and interpreted in words. The researcher will also observe 4 Senior Phase educators in their classrooms and discuss their lesson plans with them on top of the questionnaires administered to them. Schumacher et al (1993, p .256) also stresses that observational method relies on a researcher's seeing and hearing things and recording these observations rather than relying on subject's self report responses to questions or statements. Most of the questions were based on the literature review as they deal with the theory of Curriculum 2005. ✓

### **1.5 Limitations of the study**

Findings emanating from this single school case study cannot be generalised to other schools because the research was conducted at a small-scale. Respondents are usually not eager to respond to questionnaires and their motivation to respond carefully and honestly are low. Questionnaires are a convenient means of collecting attitudinal and perceptual data but they require that the researcher reduce her questions to a set of items that may be too limiting. The go-slow by a certain teacher union in the district delayed the observation process and this forced the researcher to observe and conduct interviews for two weeks. Educators did not feel at ease during observation because they thought it was inspection. This feeling of uneasiness was caused by the fact that it was for the first time for these educators to be observed teaching in their classrooms.

## **1.6 Structure of the study**

This research project is divided into five chapters.

Chapter 1 is introductory and it provides the overview of the study.

Chapter 2 is the literature review, which provides a broad discussion of the principles underpinning the curriculum, theories of teaching and learning as well as methods of teaching and assessing learners in terms of Curriculum 2005.

Chapter 3 is the research methods chapter, which offers an insight in the specific research conducted and further, examines the research methods used, the research questions used, the population sample used and the nature of the analysis of data collected from this study.

Chapter 4 focuses on the presentation and discussion of the findings with special reference to observations and the questionnaire used in the study.

Chapter 5 gives a summary of the main findings of the research and recommendations on the implementation of theories, methods of teaching and assessing Senior Phase learners in terms of Curriculum 2005.

## **1.7 Conclusion**

This research was conducted in a single Junior Secondary school using observation and a questionnaire as research methods for data collection. The total population of 14 of the professional staff in Senior Phase was used.

Following this chapter will be chapter 2, which deals with the review of the literature relating to the topic. The chapter will look more closely at the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005, theories of teaching and learning as well as methods of teaching and assessing Senior Phase learners in terms of Curriculum 2005.

## **CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING AND LEARNING IN CURRICULUM 2005.**

### **2.1 Introduction**

The purpose of this chapter is to look more closely at the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005, theories of teaching and learning, methods of teaching and assessment in the framework of Curriculum 2005. The researcher will also take note of the role played by parents in helping their learners to learn. Changing from what one is used to do or learning a new skill creates doubts and feelings of incompetence especially when one tries something for the first time. Fullan (1991, p. 30) argues that the anxiety of uncertainty and joys of mastery are central to the subjective meaning of educational change. Change has to occur in practice in order for it to have a chance of affecting an outcome. Teachers need to have a positive attitude towards Curriculum 2005 in order to accomplish this outcome. They should practise the methods of teaching in a very creative way and be in a position to reflect on their practice.

Educational theorists formulate some theories and teachers themselves derive others as they engage in the practice of teaching. Meaning that, there is no linear process that is followed when change is being implemented as Fullan (1991, p. 26) stated that change is a journey not a blue print meaning that it is non-linear, located with uncertainty and sometimes perverse. Fullan (1991) sees curriculum as a living process rather than a blue print. So therefore, teachers need to see themselves in the role of reflective practitioners or even researchers, trying out and reflecting on ideas from curriculum guidelines provided by the education departments. In the researcher's experience she can argue that for teachers to be confident and competent they need to be empowered with skills and strategies to manage change in their schools as well as in their classrooms. It also implies that the focus of curriculum change should be in the individual school acting as a learning organisation and supported through access to the resources of a broader system.

### **2.2 Curriculum Change**

As Fullan (1991) stated that people do not learn or accomplish complex changes by being told or shown what to do. Changes that are practical may be trivial or offensive while complex one

may not be practically worked out. Teachers need to know that attending workshops without practically implementing what one has been trained in cannot change the situation unless one implements the information received. Educators need to interact with each other in order to learn to do something new and share their experiences. By doing this they will get support and advice from their peers. The foundation of learning something new is interaction. Fullan (1991, p. 123) is also of the view that training approaches to implementation are effective when they combine concrete, teacher-specific training activities, ongoing continuous assistance and support during the process of implementation and regular meetings with peers and others. The more complex the change, the more interaction is required during implementation. This supports the view that people can and do change if they adapt themselves to change.

Moreover, Fullan (1991, p.124) states that evaluation and monitoring progress is probable one of the most difficult and complex strategies for change 'to get right'. The success of implementation is the establishment of effective ways of getting information on how well or poorly a change is going in the classroom. Educators need to be visited and supported in their classrooms by subject specialists so as to have a clear picture of what is happening in class. The distribution of material resources is one of the aspects that retard change, as it will make a big difference between learners in highly resourced schools and learners in under resourced schools. Educators need to be trained on how to develop their own resource materials and this needs time on the side of educators to prepare and construct classroom resources, to profile and track each learner, discuss projects with groups of learners and a lot of time is needed for cooperation between teachers. Above all, teacher commitment is of importance towards successful learning. Teachers need to be encouraged to form Phase clusters so as to share their experiences and knowledge about the new curriculum. Curriculum change in South Africa has an impact on the teaching styles of educators, learning styles of learners, teaching resources and functioning of the school. Following is the nature of the new South African curriculum implemented in Senior Phase classrooms.

### **2.3 The New South African Curriculum**

Curriculum 2005 is aiming at developing thinking, problem-solving citizens who will be empowered to participate in the development of the country in an active and productive way. So therefore, the selection of topics for teaching and learning, and the selection of teaching methods should empower learners to work collaboratively with others. The activities need to



focus on strengthening the development of a child's respect for own cultural identity, language, values and for cultures and religions different from his/her own. Christie (1999, p. 282) postulated that the learning programmes should promote learners abilities to be critical and creative thinkers. These learning programmes should provide learners with activities that will enable them to brainstorm, analyse, give their points of view, interpret, gather data and to organise. Activities should also promote group work as well as teamwork in various ways. Cooperative learning should be promoted. Furthermore, learning activities should be learner centred and integrated across the curriculum. Learners learn by doing and should be assessed continuously using different approaches to cater for individual differences. Due to the implementation of this new curriculum to schools, educators are required to change some of their traditional methods and adopt an Outcomes Based Approach to deliver Curriculum 2005 to their classrooms.

According to Fullan (1991, p.134) becoming better teachers means greater confidence in deciding on instructional issues and in handling problems. Teacher's certainty and teacher commitment feed on each other thus increasing teacher's motivation to do even better. Curriculum 2005 is believed to be providing teachers with a degree of freedom to select the content and methods through which the learners will achieve intended outcomes. The teachers' role in the new curriculum is not seen as to passively follow a curriculum 'blueprint' in the form of a prescribed syllabus, but is seen as to actively construct a curriculum as they go. They need to decide what learning activities and materials will best help the particular learners in their classes to achieve the intended outcomes and assessment criteria set out in Curriculum 2005, also deciding in what order and at what pace to tackle these. They need to integrate various outcomes in an ongoing learning programme. They need to negotiate elements of the day-to-day curriculum with the learners finding out together what they already know, what they need or want to know, how the class will go about discovering what they need to know, etc. Above all, teachers must also reflect on, and maintain a learning environment that encourages purposeful and enjoyable learning environment. In addition, OBE approach requires teachers and learners to focus their attention on the desired end results of each learning process as well as on the instructive and learning processes that will guide the learners to these end results.

The clarity of focus helps educators to establish a clear picture of the learning they want students to exhibit in a performance demonstration. This means that everyone involved must

have a clear picture of what is wanted at the end. This implies that educators must ensure that learners are clear about the criteria against which they are to be assessed and therefore what they are going to demonstrate (Department of Education, 2002, p.3). The clear picture of desired outcomes is the starting point of the curriculum, instruction and assessment planning and implementation of all which must perfectly match. Meaning that the instructional process in the classroom begins with the sharing, explaining and modelling the outcome on day one and continually thereafter (Spady, 1994, p.11).

For successful teaching and learning, educators need to be teacher- learners and learners to be learner- teachers. In actual fact, the instructional process involves altering the power structure, for example, there are times where learners need to negotiate the curriculum with the educator. For effective teaching, schools must be linked to a larger social good, that is, they must cluster with other schools so that teachers share information and resources. They must join forces with others and must realize that they are part of a larger environment, as there are more ideas 'out there'. They must be trained on how to develop the learning programmes that will satisfy the needs of learners. For teachers to be able to implement the curriculum successfully they need to base their knowledge and understanding on the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005. These are embedded in the Critical and Developmental Outcomes and are briefly described as follows.

## **2.4 Principles underpinning Curriculum 2005.**

The principles underpinning Curriculum 2005 provide a structure for teachers to make sense of changes in the curriculum. These principles are embedded in the critical and specific outcomes. The principles are Outcomes Based Education, learner-centeredness, relevance and integration, differentiation, redress and learner support, nation-building and non-discrimination, critical and creative thinking, flexibility, progression and credibility.

### **Outcomes Based Education**

Outcomes Based Education is a flexible and empowerment-oriented approach to learning which is intended to ensure that all learners are able to develop and achieve to their maximum ability and are equipped for life long learning. It promotes that everyone involved in learning must have a clear picture of what to be achieved. The Specific Outcomes to be addressed are

clearly stated before developing teaching and learning activities. It also promotes creativity and activity based learning. In Outcomes Based Education teachers need to be confident in their learners' abilities and set high expectations for their learners so that they reach their full potential. Teachers should also find a number of ways to expose learners to multiple learning opportunities (Department of Education, 2004).

#### Learner-centredness

It is the view of Gultig (2002) that the development of learning programmes and materials should put learners first, recognising and building on their knowledge and experience and responding to their needs. Teachers need to take into consideration the conceptual progression when planning learning activities so as to prepare suitable activities for their learners. In the learning situation teachers should know the characteristics of learners they are working with and to accommodate different learning styles in accordance to the uniqueness of the learner and his or her own way of learning. In addition, teachers should encourage learners to reflect on their own learning progress whilst working at their own pace.

#### Relevance

Gultig (2002) claims that a curriculum should be relevant and appropriate to current and future needs of the individual, society and industry. One of the demands the society faces is the gradual change in information technology. This means that learning programmes should enable learners to be technologically literate and environmentally aware and responsible. Knowledge boundaries that learners are familiar with must also include unfamiliar areas. For example, learners should be exposed in accessing information in computers. When planning the learning programmes the selection of topics, approaches and methods for learning and teaching need to reflect cultural diversity and language. Topics should be relevant to the context in which learners live.

#### Integration and progression

Integration encourages the learning of skills, knowledge, attitudes and values across the curriculum. It helps to minimise the danger of fragmenting knowledge into small compartments. Department of Education (1995) states that an integrated approach to education

and training implies a view of learning that rejects a rigid division between academic and applied knowledge. When planning, teachers should integrate the learning outcomes within the learning area and also to integrate across other learning areas. Teachers need to cater for integration in their teaching by developing knowledge, skills, values and attitudes in an integrated way not as separate entities. Learning programmes should facilitate progression from one class, phase or learning outcome to another from any starting point in the education system (Department Of Education, 1995). Conceptual progression from grade to grade in Curriculum 2005 is not clear and affects the way teachers plan their activities for different grades in a specific phase. In the researcher's experience teachers tend to focus more on the integration of knowledge across other learning areas than to focus on the integration of skills, knowledge, and values as well as conceptual progression within a specific learning area.

#### Critical and creative thinking

According to Department Of Education (1995) learning programmes should promote learners' ability to think logically and analytically as well as holistically and laterally. Teachers need to change their thinking as only sources of knowledge to the thinking that learners are valued as equal and active participants in learning and development process. Learners need to be actively engaged in the activities trying to solve problems themselves, by so doing, teachers will be promoting one of the critical outcomes which states that learners need to be able to identify, solve problems and make decisions using critical and creative thinking.

#### Flexibility

Learning programmes should be flexible. They should provide an increasing range of learning possibilities, offering learners flexibility in choosing what, where, when, how and what pace they want to learn (Department Of Education, 1995). Learners need to negotiate the curriculum with their teachers. Flexi-time in the school time- table will offer classrooms the opportunity of spending time on areas that need redress or that address the specific needs or interest of their learners. In Curriculum 2005, learning does not only take place in the classroom during instructional time by the educator but anywhere and any time.

## Differentiation, redress and learner support

According to Gultig (2002) learning programmes should facilitate the creation of opportunities for all learners, including those who are disabled in some or other way to strive towards the attainment of similar learning outcomes. This means that Curriculum 2005 promotes inclusivity, which relates to dealing with a wide spectrum of issues such as, racism, gender, disability, HIV/ AIDS and other transmittable diseases. The principle of inclusivity addresses the right of all learners to the same learning opportunities. The school curriculum should ensure full participation of all learners irrespective of their abilities, disabilities, culture, race, gender, language and socio-economic status. Furthermore, inclusivity also relates to acceptance that learners come with different experiences, interests, strengths and barriers to learning which needs to be accommodated in the classroom.

## Nation building and non-discrimination

Learning programmes should protect and advance basic human rights irrespective of gender, race, class or age. Learners need to develop a sense of self-worth and need to experience acceptance, irrespective of what language they speak, which gender they belong to, etc.

Girls need to attain equality with boys. Education to focus on strengthening the development of a child's respect for his or her parents, own cultural identity, language and values of the country of birth and for cultures and religions different from his or her own.

Knowledge and understanding of these principles by teachers will influence the development of learning programmes, learning activities and assessment. In addition to this, teachers practise their teaching within the context of some theories formulated by educational theorists and researchers. They also derive other theories as they engage themselves in the practise of teaching. For example, reflecting about what went well and what needs to be improved in the lesson that was taught gives a teacher new ideas on how to approach a particular theme in various ways. The teacher's experiences will then be used to promote meaningful teaching and learning. In the next section the researcher will discuss some of the behaviourist, cognitive developmental and constructivist theories that teachers need to take into consideration in their day-to-day practice.

## **2.5 Theories of teaching and learning that underpin Curriculum 2005**

All teachers need to know and understand teaching and learning theories if they are to negotiate the demands of teaching and be effective in their classrooms on a daily basis. Theories enable teachers to make sense of and to respond rationally to classroom events.

Duminy et al (1987) claim that teaching is seen as the organizing of reinforcers in order to promote learning. In order to ensure that a certain type of outcome follows on behaviour, the stimulus can be further controlled and behaviour shaped. Learning is regarded as a behavioural change based on a stimulus. The teacher's task is to ask what behaviour is required to result from learning, and then determine what reinforcers are available. He or she must determine how the reinforcers can be best used in order to contribute in the best to the behavioural change that s/he has in view. According to Wadsworth (1978, p.5) the principal goal of education is to create men and women who are capable of doing new things, not simply of repeating what other generations have done. Even the new curriculum is aiming at developing men who are creative, inventive and discoverers. The second goal of education is to form minds that can be critical, can verify and not accept everything they are offered. Meaning that Curriculum 2005 is aiming at developing citizens who will make decisions using critical and creative thinking, who work effectively with others, who collect, analyse and critically evaluate information and these goals are reflected in the Critical Outcomes.

The Critical and Developmental Outcomes of Curriculum 2005 are aiming at developing learners who will be critical and creative thinkers; who will work effectively with others; who will manage themselves, who will be able to solve problems; who will be responsible for their own learning; etc, unlike the traditional curriculum where learners were passive listeners. Learning should start with simple skills and develops towards more complex skills. The teacher should be seen as an organizer, designer and manager of the course of instruction and as an evaluator of learning outcomes. That means that the teacher is a facilitator of learning who is also capable of designing the content to be taught in class. The learner should be prepared to participate during teaching and regular feedback is an important component of the course of instruction (Fraser et al, 1993, p.43). Learners are no longer labelled or seen as empty jugs to be filled in by the teacher's knowledge but are active participants in the teaching and learning process. They investigate or discover things themselves with the assistance of the teacher in some instances. Mwamwenda (1995, p. 101) supports this when stating that the learner is perceived as someone who is not only an active discoverer, but also an inventor and

problem solver. Even though behaviourists regard the primary stimuli, reinforcement and reward as responsible for motivating the learner to achieve success, cognitive psychologists (like Gagne) believe that individuals are motivated to perform better when they understand a task as a whole.

The backbone of all learning is for the teachers to prepare learners to gain meaning and understanding in everything they learn. The teacher's preparation begins with a didactic analysis of content based on the meaning of the content or what it ought to be for the gaining of experience, knowledge, proficiency and skill by the child. What is the structure of the content? What can motivate the child to become interested in the subject content and by what may the content be unfolded (Fraser et al, 1993). The teacher reflects further on the structure of his/her teaching methods and aids, and on the organization of his teaching. Teachers cannot improve their teaching if they are not prepared to experiment with new strategies and learn from their experiences. They need to reflect critically on all aspects of their teaching and learners' achievement, they will be able to see how the things they do and the decisions they make influence learning in their classrooms. Reflection will help them to gain a better understanding of why they teach and what they teach. This reflection will help them to become more effective teachers.

In Norms and Standards for Educators (1998) teachers need to achieve 'reflexive competence', that is, to be able to reflect on their classroom practice, to reflect on the relevant theories that could inform their practice and then to plan lessons based on both their practical and theoretical understanding. When a teacher becomes a reflexive educator, the teacher is able to analyse, discuss, evaluate and improve his own practice. A teacher will plan a lesson, assess and or reflect on his lesson, think about other teaching experiences and theories, evaluate his lesson and plan further, taking his evaluation into account in further planning. In this way, he will be engaged in a 'reflective cycle' and will think about his practice in terms of theories of teaching in terms of his practical experience. When teachers are reflecting on their practise, they need not to reflect on everything – they need to pin point something. It is good to focus on a particular aspect of the lesson and not to think about everything at once.

According to Probyn et al (2004) in Piaget's theory people try to make sense of the world and actively create their knowledge through direct experience with objects, people and ideas. Educators can use Piaget's theory of cognitive development to understand student's thinking,

to match instructional strategies to student's abilities and to directly foster student's cognitive development. People inherit the tendency to adapt to their environment by means of two basic processes such as assimilation and accommodation. Child centred teaching and learning rests on the simple observation that any instruction demands a certain degree of maturity of certain functions. Development must complete certain cycles before instruction can begin. Since instruction given in one area can transform and reorganize other areas of the child's thought, it may only follow maturing or keep in step with it but also precede it and further its progress.

Probyn et al (2004) stated that children learn through experience, through discovering things for themselves. Piaget claimed that through experience and interacting with their environment children build up increasingly complex mental pictures (schemata) or concepts, of how things work and interact (Vygotsky, 1989). He claimed that, the intrinsic motivation for learning is an evolutionary impulse towards equilibrium: this is consistent with the child's existing schemata, the new knowledge from the experience would be assimilated into the child's existing schemata, then disequilibrium would occur and the child would adapt their schemata in order to accommodate the new concept. Further more, Piaget in (Vygotsky, 1989) sees learning as the process of an individual interacting with the world and in so doing continuously reshaping and refining their internalised view of that world.

Vygotsky (1989, p.175) states that instruction and development depend on each other. He proposed the concept of a Zone of Proximal Development as the area where the child cannot solve a problem alone but can be successful under adult guidance or in collaboration with a more advanced peer. This is the area where children in challenging situations can develop thinking abilities through appropriate guidance and support from teachers and peers. This means that learning is a social process, teachers are conscious of providing opportunities for learners to talk through and write about their ideas as a way of internalising them. Teachers need to adjust learning tasks so that they fall within learner's ZPD. Some of the educational implications of Vygotsky's zone of proximal development are:

- ❖ Learners should be guided by explanations, demonstrations and work with other students.
- ❖ Learners should be encouraged to use language to organize their thinking, to talk about what they are trying to accomplish.
- ❖ Instructional conversations are an alternative to the dominance of teacher talk-the teacher's goal is to keep everyone engaged in a substantive discussion.



- ❖ Teachers need to do more than just arrange the environment so that learners can discover on their own.
- ❖ Sometimes the best teacher is another learner who has just figured out the problem and is probably operating within the ZPD.
- ❖ Learners should be put in situations where support from other students or from the teacher is available.

Woolfolk (1995, p.277) is of the view that the cognitive constructivist view of learning emphasizes that learners construct their own knowledge through acting and interacting with the world. The role of other people may be important but is not considered essential.

Constructivists do not view the learner as a passive being in the teaching learning process but as a person who can think and understand and is able to assimilate new knowledge into his existing and cognitive structure. The learner is seen as a person who builds or constructs his own language. Teachers are so busy teaching children what to learn, they do not bother to teach children how to learn. When you teach children how to learn, you give them skills to learn anything (The Star, Editorial, 1998, p.14). This involves an awareness of the skills, strategies and resources that are required for effective performance of a task. These views directly link to Curriculum 2005 because constructive learning forms an integral part of Curriculum 2005 and Outcomes Based Education.

It is the view of Nickerson (1988, p.20) that metacognition can be considered as thinking about our thinking and control our cognition. It involves knowledge about cognitive strategies –an awareness of the skills, strategies and resources that are required for effective performance of a task. It also involves control the ability to use self regulatory mechanisms to ensure the successful completion of the task. This includes checking the outcome of learning and problem-solving attempts, planning and evaluating the effectiveness of any attempted action, testing and revising strategies used in learning and taking remedial to overcome difficulties. This includes management of one's own cognitive resources and monitoring of one's intellectual performance. Kruger et al (1988, p.78) point out that when planning a lesson, the teacher decides on the plan he wishes to carry out in order that learners master the specified learning outcomes. A planned procedure intended to achieve a specific aim is a teaching method. Above all, the method of teaching must depend on the learning content and learning outcomes of the lesson. There are other factors that can influence the use of various methods

employed in the classroom such as the number of pupils, available resources, available time, etc. It should focus on the learning outcomes the learners have to master.

Different approaches have to be used alternatively in relationship with the specific learning outcomes, specific learning content, the entry level and prior knowledge of the learners, the learning styles of the learners, teacher-learner ratios, available facilities and teaching and learning. Gunter et al (1995, p.74) is of the opinion that if a teacher creates a single environment in the classroom or repeatedly uses the same instructional approach, only those students who learn well in that environment or with that approach will succeed. The teacher who utilizes a variety of instructional approaches is more likely to reach all students in the classroom; students are encouraged to learn in a variety of ways. OBE promotes learning that is active, participatory and learner centred. Meaning that outcomes in outcomes based classroom learning will be active and participatory, learners will be investigative and will work co-operatively (Bertram et al, 1997).

Spady (1991, p.68) pointed out that cooperative learning results in more vigorous and lively responses from learners so that they question, debate and socialise in a democratic atmosphere and an environment that reflects community life. This idea reminds us that progressive schools and schools where the principles of Outcomes Based Education are applied are not only learner-centred, but also strongly community centred because these schools aspire to prepare the youth for future social life. Learners participate effectively with others in a team, group, organization or community. Outcomes Based Education as a principle of Curriculum 2005 encourages learners to investigate, to work in groups to solve problems. Outcomes Based Education is of the fact that learners learn best when they are supported, are involved in what they do and do learning activities that are relevant to their lives.

For Killen (2000, p. xii) whatever approach to teaching one uses, learners will learn more when they are motivated than when they are not motivated. This means that learning will be more effective when one makes it interesting, enjoyable and challenging for learners. Killen proposed the following guidelines for effective learning:

- Learning activities should promote learner curiosity (they should encourage learners to ask why, how and what if?).
- Learning activities should be appropriate to the learners' level of academic social development.

- Learning activities should be related to the every day life experience of learners (so that they learn to make sense of the world).
- Learners should be encouraged and helped to understand how their learning is relevant to their outside environment.
- They need to experience success if they are to have a positive attitude towards learning and a high self-esteem.
- Teachers should take into account the knowledge, skills and attitudes that learners bring with them to the classroom.
- When developing teaching strategies and learning activities, teachers should take into account the diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their learners.
- They should emphasise that the development of understanding of concepts and principles is more important than the recall of factual information or the development of routine skills.

Mwamwenda (1995, p.213) argues that discovery learning does not necessarily mean coming up with knowledge by oneself. It involves rearranging or transforming evidence so as to obtain new information independently. To encourage discovery, learners should be provided with opportunities to engage in thinking, insights and problem solving as an integral part of their education. This can be done by exposing learners to inductive processes that will ultimately lead to the discovery of the principles and concepts underlying whatever they may be studying. Instead of revealing to learners the major concepts and principles they are expected to learn from a lesson, an educator should give learners the opportunity of discovering for themselves. In actual fact, discovery learning enables a learner to increase his ability to learn related material, it increases his interest in the task in which he is involved, it contributes to lasting retention of information, and it makes transfer of learning probable as well as training learners in important thinking operations such as comparing, summarizing and trains them how to learn. Learners are encouraged to discover things themselves through collecting, analysing and evaluating in order to make a responsible decision when solving a problem. This is promoted by one of Curriculum 2005 Critical Outcomes that learners should be empowered with skills that will help them to collect, analyse, organise and critically evaluate information (Department of Education, 2004).

In co-operative learning members of the group learn more than they would have done individually. Wilmot et al (2003, p. 6) advocates that co-operative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximise their own and each other's learning. This means that teachers must have a purpose of using this approach and must use small groups to enable each member to work together with other members through sharing experiences.

For Wilmot et al (2003, pp. 4 & 18) teachers can structure lessons co-operatively so that learners work together to achieve shared goals. With this approach learners are assigned to small groups and are taught to learn the assigned material and make sure that the other members of the group learn the assigned material. In this learning, positive interdependence among learners is necessary in order to achieve the learning goal. Learners know that they can achieve their learning goal if all the members of the group also reach their goal. Learners are required to work collaboratively with others, to share and discuss material, to help another to make sense of it and to encourage one another to work hard so that the group can succeed. For this approach to work effectively, teachers need to know and understand that co-operative approach to learning is more than putting learners in groups and tell them to work but is characterised by a common goal that must be reached and which cannot be reached without the input from all the members of the group. Wilmot et al (2003, p.25) describe eight steps in teaching co-operative skills as follows:

1. Help learners to see the need for a skill.
2. Help learners get a clear understanding of what the skill is, conceptually and behaviourally.
3. Set up practise situations.
4. Ensure that each learner receives feedback on how well s/he is using the skill.
5. Encourage learners to persevere in practising the skill.
6. Set up situations in which the skills can be used successfully.
7. Require the skills to be used often enough to become integrated into the natural behaviours.
8. Establish classroom norms to support the use of the skills.

Killen (2000, p.x) states that no single teaching strategy is effective all the time for all learners. Learner-centred approaches place a much stronger emphasis on the learner's role in the learning process. Co-operative learning is an example of a learner-centred approach. When

teachers are using learner- centred approaches to teaching, they still need to set the learning agenda but they have much less direct control over what and how learners learn. The two approaches to teaching (teacher-centred and learner-centred approaches) differ in a number of important ways including what the teacher does, how the lessons are organised, how much the learners are involved actively in learning, how much the learners are responsible for their own learning and how learning is assessed. In either approach, teachers have a central role as both planners and facilitators of learning. They have to decide what outcomes learners are to achieve and they have to help them learn. The real difference is on how teachers structure and mediate their learners' learning. In all, learning will be effective when a teacher makes it interesting, enjoyable and challenging for learners.

In actual fact, as stated by Probyn et al (2004) the move towards more 'learner-centred', 'activity base' methods of teaching and learning in Curriculum 2005 is based on the following constructive ideas of how children learn:

- Teachers design activities that will allow learners to discover some things for themselves.
- Children work co-operatively in groups and share ideas with one another and with their teacher, who pushes them beyond what they already know, to find new ideas and concepts.
- Learners are actively involved and take responsibility for their own learning.
- Learners bring some knowledge to the learning process; their prior learning is recognised.
- Language, in particular dialogue between learners, and between learners and their teacher, is an important way of learning.
- Learning is seen as a process, not just a final product at examination time.
- Assessment is used to inform and shape the learning process.
- Teachers keep a continuous record of the learner's progress and teacher and learners use this evidence to decide how well they are learning.
- Teachers also use it to decide whether the teaching methods they are using are working well or whether they need to be adapted.

The next section will focus on the teaching and learning methods that a teacher can use when implementing Curriculum 2005.

## **2.6 Methods of teaching and learning**

Effective use of teaching methods is a way in which the teachers can assist learners to achieve Critical and Specific Outcomes. Outcomes Based Education is aiming at organising all learning activities in a manner that learners achieve the learning outcomes. The teacher designs activities in line with the learning outcomes to be achieved and these activities should match the intended learning outcomes. They are joined together by a teaching strategy that the teacher uses to help the learners attain the desired learning outcomes. Within a strategy are methods that can be used for carrying out the strategy successfully. Jacobs et al (2003) defines a teaching method as a particular technique a teacher uses to help learners gain the knowledge that they need to achieve a desired outcome. For the achievement of the outcomes, the teacher needs to plan the steps he is going to follow when guiding the learners. Teachers need to motivate and create exciting opportunities for learners to learn and be flexible to use different teaching methods. When planning and preparing lessons, teachers must select methods that give room for maximum learner participation. The researcher in the next pages will discuss several participative and expository teaching methods from which a teacher may select.

### **2.6.1 Participative methods**

Jacobs et al (2003) defines participative methods as those methods that focus on the learner playing a central role in teaching-learning activities. These methods encourage learners to participate fully in classroom activities. Learners are the ones who take initiatives through the help of the knowledgeable person to solve problems. These methods strengthen the bond between the teacher and learners and amongst learners themselves. Some of these methods are problem solving, discussion, question and answer, project, role-play and experimental methods.

#### **The Problem –Solving Method**

For Jacobs et al (2003, p.235) this method allows learners to discover things for themselves and to engage in solving problems. They learn through self-activity. It is important for teachers to guide learners towards problems that form part of the prescribed outcomes. Problem-solving is inquiry based learning which engages learners in seeking knowledge, processing information and applying ideas to real-world situation (Van der Horst et al, 1998, p.17). This means that

learners need to be given real problems to solve such as, investigations where they investigate about a real problem, process data and apply ideas to real situations. Problem solving sharpens learners' thinking and reasoning skills and also stimulates interest within the individual to solve other problems. The suggestion that learners should be given many opportunities to identify problems, apply critical and creative thinking, make responsible decisions and solve problems (Jacobs et al (2003, p.38), is a fact. Learners need to be given interesting activities such as role plays, debates, investigations, etc. These activities should be carried out in an environment conducive to effective teaching. Such an environment is not dependent on good resources. It is a classroom in which learners are motivated to be curious, to reflect, ask questions and express their opinions instead of being receptors. Teachers can obtain thinking-centred activities from textbooks, newspapers, magazines, etc or design their own activities based on problem solving.

## Discussion methods

Discussion is the means whereby people make contact with others and establish a relationship with reality. It encourages attentive listening, prevents boredom in the class and in the group and also encourages natural interaction between learners. According to Jacobs et al (2003, p.211) a discussion can be defined as a co-operative discourse between two or more people with a definite purpose in view. It allows for a planned and systematic teaching-learning conversation between the teacher and learners and among learners. Teachers need to plan the discussion according to the intended outcomes and to give learners an opportunity to think about the topic on discussion. Discussions help learners to share experiences and to gain more knowledge from others. This is a way of teaching in which learners work together to ensure that all members in their groups have learnt and assimilated. Each member of the group has a sense of belonging and depending on other members. Members work together as a team. For effective classroom discussion; learners need to be allowed to acquire knowledge before the discussion, link the discussion to current subject matter and to be made aware of the discussion techniques. The teacher needs to create a suitable climate for discussion, should accept and be kind to all learners. Motivating attitude through guidance can enable learners to participate fully in the discussion. The teacher needs to give learners time to obtain knowledge about the topic before discussion. This will enable them to contribute during the discussion. The topic on discussion should aim at achieving a particular learning outcome and be discussed in such a way that every learner participates. The size of the class needs to be taken into consideration.

### Project method

For Jacobs et al (2003, p.231) this method requires learners to participate in a project designed by the teacher or learners' idea. A challenging project should be realistic, encourages problem-solving, be interesting and should have clear assessment criteria. Learners need to be told before time what needs to be done, when the task should be completed and how is it going to be assessed.

### Role- play teaching method

Dramatisation and simulation games enable learners to participate fully in a learning situation by acting out make-belief situations. They aim at stimulating learners' interest and encourage learners to find solutions about everyday problems. Topics to be acted should relate to the programme organiser and all the learners to be given a chance to take part. Learners need to be given different topics over a period of time. These methods are commonly used in Languages but can also be used successfully in Life Orientation, Arts and Culture, Human and Social Sciences and Economic Management Sciences provided that provided that the written script from which learners read is linked to the lesson outcomes. In a simulation game the learners assume the roles of decision makers, act as if they were actually involved in a real life situation and compete for certain goals (Jacobs et al, 2003, p.232).

### The experimental method

This method allows learners to experience reality and discover things themselves. It is commonly used in Natural and Biological Sciences. It encourages learners to learn through self discovery, exploration and observation. Fraser et al (1993, p.160) state that this method uses objects during teaching and learners gain insight by means of direct observation. It is about the discovery of reality by means of examples and making of generalised statements based on the findings thereof.



### 2.6.2 Expository methods

Expository methods are teacher centred methods. Some of these methods are the telling or lecture method, question and answer method, demonstration method, etc. Although Outcomes Based Education stresses the use of learner centred methods, the teacher still needs to explain facts, give guided instructions or direction towards intended outcomes, clear misconceptions, add on what learners know, etc.

#### Question and answer method

Duminy et al (1987, p.63) argue that Socrates teaching meant not the pouring of knowledge but the drawing-out and systematising of knowledge and truths already dormant in the learner's mind. The teacher plays a dominant role when this method is used; he sets questions which direct the learning towards the specific objectives of a lesson. Questions to range from basic, easy questions to more difficult questions and should gradually lead the pupil to a greater understanding of the learning content. Questions to be asked need to maximise learner participation, to deepen learner's understanding of the subject matter and to develop a variety of skills.

#### Demonstration method

Fraser et al (1993, p.159) define demonstration as the carrying out of actions by a capable person, without the teaching aids or applicable material. The aim is to transfer certain skills, capabilities or knowledge to the learners, so that learners can master the skills through observation of a series of actions. The demonstrator uses examples in the form of models or specimen. This method is usually associated with Natural Science.

There is still a need for these methods in Outcomes Based Education but to a limited extent. Teachers should understand the need to integrate assessment as part of teaching and learning activities. Assessment should not be seen as just an 'add on' at the end of some unit of learning. It should focus on helping learners to develop competence rather than tended to focus on criticizing learner's shortcomings. The next session will focus on assessment. Assessment must constantly support the teaching and learning process. Pahad (1997) states that the

assessment process must ensure and encourage life long learning development. The teacher supports and develops learners to take responsibility of their own learning.

## **2.5 Assessment**

In Curriculum 2005 just like in the Revised National Curriculum, knowledge, skills, values and attitudes are assessed continuously. Purposes of continuous assessment are to:

- Find out what learners already know.
- Determine whether the learning required is actually taking place.
- Identify learning difficulties.
- Promote learning by giving feedback to learners.
- Evaluate effectiveness of teaching strategies and materials.
- Give feed back to parents.
- Enable learners to know their strengths and weaknesses.

Educators need to move away from emphasis in memorization to assess learner's knowledge, skills, values and attitudes. Assessment should be transparent, that is, Outcomes should be made known to learners before assessing them and learners to be involved in during assessment. The educator should focus on selected outcomes and to use knowledge in real life contexts. Good teachers have worked out some cardinal principles to observe when making assessment (Gauteng Education Department, 2001) such as:

-Every assessment should have a clear focus.

Teachers to start by asking what they want to find out through considering what knowledge, skills and abilities their learners will need in order to make progress.

-Every assessment should have a clear purpose.

Teachers must understand why they assess learner activities. They must think about how they will use the information that comes out of the assessment.

-The focus and purpose of an assessment determine the best method to use.

Once the teacher knows exactly what knowledge, skills and abilities s/he is looking for in learners, and how to use information about them, s/he will be able to decide how to do the

assessment.

-Assessment activities should match the desired learning outcomes.

Teachers must provide learners with opportunities to demonstrate these outcomes. When assessment activities enable learners to do things that form part of a particular outcome, the teacher gain accurate and reliable information about how learners are progressing towards that outcome.

-Assessment should concentrate on selected learning outcomes.

Teachers need to concentrate on the important outcomes and assess progress towards them thoroughly. A well-designed assessment activity will allow strong learners to show how much they can do and will indicate where weaker learners are having difficulties.

-Assessment should be built into the process of teaching and learning from the start.

A good teacher constantly checks her learners' progress and modifies her teaching plans to meet the learners' needs. Assessment must be built into a regular pattern of classroom activities.

It is the responsibility of the teacher to plan, teach and assess learning activities in order to achieve an intended outcome. It is through assessment that one knows whether the outcome has been achieved. Norms and Standards for Educators Policy (1998) states the seven roles of teachers of which a teacher as an assessor of learning is one of the roles. Assessment in the General and Education Band Policy Grade R-9 and ABET (1998) view assessment as learner-centred and criteria referenced. Teachers assess learners and learners also assess themselves using criteria that are specified before hand. Continuous assessment is an ongoing process throughout the period of learning to establish what a learner knows and understands, can do is like and values. Teachers should follow assessment policy framework for teaching and learning. They need to plan before, during and after in so doing promoting reflection and re-planning. Learners are continuously assessed and teachers use the results of their assessment to continuously diagnose learning and teaching in order to determine whether to provide support to learning and whether to adapt our teaching and plan for further learning. Each learner is given time and support needed to achieve his or her potential.

As the assessor of learning the teacher needs to:

- Have a sound understanding of the Specific Outcomes and Skills, Knowledge, Values and Attitudes contained in each.
- Integrate teaching into the teaching and learning process.
- Understand the purpose of assessment and provide helpful feedback to learners.
- Be able to design and manage assessment appropriately.
- Keep detailed and diagnostic records of assessment.
- Know how to interpret and use assessment results to improve planning.

What do teachers assess determines the forms of assessment of which the evidence is shown that a particular Specific Outcome has been achieved. Each Learning Area has its own activities to be assessed like written assignments, spoken texts, creative writing, survey, investigation, debates, etc. These activities can be used as evidence of competence for different Specific Outcomes.

According to Department Of Education (2004) when considering the evidence gathered, teachers have to ask themselves the following:

- Is the evidence valid? Is the evidence related to the Specific Outcomes and assessment ? Is it from an objective, reliable source?
- Is the evidence authentic? Is it learner's own work?
- Is the evidence current? Is the evidence recent? If not, can the learner still demonstrate the competence?
- Is the evidence sufficient? There should be enough evidence to allow the assessor to make sound judgements about the learners' competence against the Specific Outcomes.
- Is the evidence at the required level? Is the evidence at the required level for the Specific Outcomes indicated for that particular phase?

In Department of Education (2004) teachers assess learners to

- Plan teaching and learning.
- Identify the strengths and needs of learners.
- Diagnose learning barriers.
- Help learners improve their work.
- Provide evidence of learners' level of performance or achievement.

Teachers also need to assess themselves to:

- Judge the effectiveness of our planning.
- Adjust the pace and the focus of teaching and learning to learner's needs.
- Provide feedback to learners, parents and other stakeholders.
- Make decisions about and improve how they teach.

Assessment methods refer to who will assess the evidence from learners. The Specific Outcome to be achieved and the type of activity will determine the choice of the method. These methods are teacher assessment, peer assessment, and group assessment. Teacher assessment is when the teacher assesses learners continuously or at given intervals, assesses for different purposes, identifies what learning support learners need and want to improve teaching and learning strategies. Self-assessment is when learners are given the criteria for assessment before starting the task. When they have completed it, they are asked to reflect on what they have learned using the criteria provided. Peer assessment is when a learner is asked to assess the performance of another learner when they are working in pairs or as a group. The assessment criteria are agreed upon before the assessment starts. This gives learners an opportunity to evaluate their own and their peers' performance. In group assessment, a group of learners is asked to assess their own or another group's performance. In actual fact, group assessment is good in assessing skills.

When educators are introducing a new lesson, they need to find out first what the learners already know about that particular topic (Baseline Assessment) so as to fill in the gaps. Baseline assessment is assessment usually used at the beginning of a phase, grade or learning experience to establish what learners already know. It assists educators with the planning of learning programmes and learning activities. Formative assessment is the ongoing process of monitoring the learners' progress. It monitors and supports the process of learning and teaching. It is used to inform teachers and learners about their progress so as to improve teaching and learning. Summative assessment is carried out at the end of a learning activity to check what learners had learnt about that particular topic. It gives an overall picture of learners' progress at a given time, for example, at the end of the term, or in transfer to another school (Department of Education, 2002).

Teachers need to use a variety of tools to assess evidence such as observation sheets, checklists, rating scales and rubrics. Observation allows teachers to focus on what the learners are doing and how they are behaving in particular situations. Checklists are useful for assessing products and procedures against a list of criteria. Rating scales allow teachers to assess and record the level of achievement quickly and accurately. Rubrics clearly describe the criteria on which the process or task learners carry out will be judged, as well as the levels that that will be applied. Teachers need to record the performance of each learner against the Specific Outcomes. They can keep a record or file to record their assessment and the information should be clearly labelled with date, learners name and grade, Specific Outcomes and Skills, Knowledge, Values and Attitudes (SKAVs) being assessed.

According to Jansen (1999, p.228) continuous assessment ought to provide fair opportunity for progress and achievement. It could be well argued that if a learner does not achieve the outcome or the competence to the criteria specified and yet is allowed to progress automatically, the very purpose of attempting to establish levels of achievement, as steps towards qualification would not be achieved. Pahad (1997, p.253) states that the purpose of ongoing formative assessment is to guide both the teacher and the learner using constructive feedback. The final integrative assessment should be designed more carefully and should be fair, reliable and valid. Assessment guidelines also are in a very simple form, for example, what to be in a learner portfolio for each learning area. For Sieborger et al (1998, p.5) assessment describes a wide range of different ways, which are now used to measure the achievements of learners. Using the word assessment means that one is not only thinking of tests, examinations and written exercises, but also of many other ways of gaining information and giving feedback about the progress of the learner. An educator is an assessor because s/he makes an assessment of the progress that a learner has made, however the purpose of educational assessment is not simply to measure what learners have achieved, but to help learners to learn and achieve more. Assessment which does not motivate learners and tell them what they need to do in order to improve does not fulfil its educational purpose.

Teachers should know the different ways to assess learning, record assessment, give helpful feedback to learners and ways to report on their assessment. Records of assessment

and examples of learner's work must be kept systematically in such a way that they can be easily retrieved in order:

- To report on and provide evidence of learner's competence, and
- To enable teachers to encourage learners and to detect areas in which particular learners need support (Adendorff, 2003).

It is of utmost importance for teachers to keep records of their findings. Teachers should record learner performance in the teacher's record book where s/he records assessment results and comments, the official learner profile document, the individual portfolio and the progression schedule. The four key requirements in the area of recording are:

**-The teacher's record book**

This must be consulted as well as written in every day when planning, preparing and monitoring learner's work in the classroom. It must be useful as well as easy to use and to contain ever growing genuine information that can be easily interpreted and combined to present a clear picture of learners' achievement and needs.

**-The official learner profile**

This document regulates the recording of a learner's life long progress at school.

**-The individual learner portfolio**

Portfolios are a useful way of gathering evidence about a learner's growth and development. It is the collection of examples of work together with reflections by the learner about his/her own learning development (Pahad, 1997).

**-The report card**

A report card must convey, through the educator's comments, a clear impression of personal knowledge of the learner, summarise achievement and progress and provide useful feedback to evaluate and improve teaching and learning.

Rubrics and checklists are tools to be used to assess learner's work by educators. Learners also use these tools as well. Educators need to know how to design and develop these tools focusing on the outcomes to be assessed. For transparency learners need to know the criteria that are to be used when assessing their competence.

Schools at present are designing their own report cards. In the Department of Education Policy in GET Band (1998) a report must convey, through the educator's comments, a clear impression of personal knowledge of the learner, summarise achievement and progress and provide useful feedback to evaluate and improve learning and teaching. The reporting process shall:

- Serve as an opportunity for educators to provide regular feedback to learners as part of the everyday teaching and learning process;
- Provide an accurate description of progress and achievement;
- Allow for comment on the personal and social development and attendance [...];
- Give an indication of the learner's strengths and development needs, and identify follow-up steps for learning and teaching;
- Encourage motivation through a constructive approach;
- Become a focal point of home and school;
- Be sensitive to the needs and responsibilities of parents.

Educators need to know that constructive feedback improve learner's performance day by day. Assessment policies will enable teachers to provide summaries that are consistent.

## **2.6 Parent involvement to the education of their children**

According to Fullan (1999, p.134) the closer the parent to the education of the child, the greater is the impact on the child development and educational achievement. This shows that parents should be involved to the education of their children. They must be in a position to negotiate curriculum with teachers. In addition, Wolfendale (1996, pp.10-13) states that it is important for teachers to feel committed to the notion of parental involvement in children's education and recognize the importance of working closely with parents; recognize that parents have much to contribute to children's education. Further more, Macbeth (1989, p.20) is of the view that schools must have a welcoming system all the time in order to encourage parents to feel that they are part of the school community. There should be a written report or profile on each child on each child presented to his/her parents at least twice a year with thorough comments by teachers about the child's progress and behaviour with a tear-off section containing questions to be replied by the parent.



The purpose of written reports is to enable teachers to render account for their service to parents, to enable teachers and parents to exchange periodic information, views and predictions about the development of a child, both academically and pastorally, to assist and focus the assessment procedure, to assist learners to understand and assess themselves and change their performance, to furnish both school and parents with a record of progress. Teachers and parents should consult at least twice a year for planning the next phase of the child's learning. At least once a term, there must be a class meeting to explain to parents with children in the same class the nature of the coming term's curriculum and how parents can reinforce it in the home. A parents' association for school should be open to all parents with children in the school. Its main concern is educational provision and parent-teacher links. Publications by the school, to keep parents informed, should be prepared in collaboration with the parents' association. These ideas are also applicable to Curriculum 2005.

In conclusion, there is no linear process that is followed when change is being implemented. Teachers in their practice should use learner-centred and activity based methods when implementing Curriculum 2005. These methods need to be supplemented by the knowledge and understanding of some theories such as cognitive development and constructivist theories. Knowledge of the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005 will also help in the designing of learning programmes. Teachers need to use other methods they discover in their journey to achieve the intended outcomes. Assessment must not be treated as a separate entity that occurs at the end of the teaching process, that is, it needs to be an integral part of the teaching and learning process.

The following chapter will deal with the research methods used in conducting this research.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research methods**

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the research methods and techniques used in this study. Reference will be made to the aims of the research, the research questions, the research methods, the population of the study, the limitation of such a study and the research instruments used.

### **3.2 The research aims**

The primary aim of the research was to conduct an investigation into the implementation of Curriculum 2005 in the Senior Phase of a Junior Secondary School in the Lusikisiki District.

The secondary aims of the research were to:

- examine educators' theoretical understanding of Curriculum 2005.
- identify teaching , learning and assessment methods used by the educators when implementing Curriculum 2005.

### **3.3 Research questions**

This research attempted to explore and answer the following questions:

- What are the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005?
- How do teachers understand and implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms?
- What methods do teachers use in teaching and assessing the learners in terms of Curriculum 2005?
- What are the implications of the findings for possible improvement and development?

### 3.4 Research methods

This research employs a qualitative research and it involves working closely with senior phase teachers of a particular school in Lusikisiki District. A written questionnaire will be administered to Senior Phase educators of the school in question as one of the methods used to gather information. Kidder et al (1986) is of the opinion that in a questionnaire, respondents answer in a relaxed atmosphere, taking their time and thus lead to well thought responses. Bias which may result from the presence of the interviewer or other respondents is easy to overcome since respondents respond privately. Confidentiality is easily honoured. Questionnaires will be administered to 14 Senior Phase educators. A questionnaire will contain both closed and open-ended questions. The inclusion of both types of questions will help in determining the frame of reference and responses from respondents. For Schumacher et al (1993, p.238) a questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardized questions, can ensure anonymity and questions can be written for specific purposes. Closed form items allow the person to choose between predetermined responses. Closed form items are best for obtaining demographic information and data that can be categorized easily. The benefits of using closed questions include saving time, getting to the point, getting to relevant data and keeping control over the interview.

In addition, Kendall et al (1988, p.130) states that open ended questions include putting interviewee at ease, revealing avenues for further questioning that may have gone untapped and providing richness of detail. Questionnaires will be administered by the researcher to all the Senior Phase teachers. The researcher will have an opportunity to establish rapport, to explain the meaning of items that may not be clear. The availability of a number of respondents in one place makes the process more economical in terms of time and expenses. Further more, questionnaires are an information gathering technique that allows system analysts to gather attitudes, beliefs, and behaviours from several key people who may be affected by the current and proposed systems (Kendall, 1988, p.158). Because of the above mentioned advantages, the researcher thought that using a questionnaire would be the most effective and efficient way to gather information.

The researcher will also observe Senior Phase educators in their classrooms and discuss their lesson plans with them on top of the questionnaires administered to them. Schumacher et al (1993, p. 256) argue that observational method relies on a researcher's seeing and hearing

things and recording these observations rather than relying on subject's self report responses to questions or statements.

### **3.5 Population**

The study was carried out in a single Junior Secondary School over a period of two weeks. All 14 members of the Senior Phase responded to the questionnaires. This particular school was selected with the intention to find out how successful Senior Phase educators are implementing Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms. Input regarding the methods of teaching, learning and assessment used by Senior Phase educators as well as parent involvement will be valuable in assessing the long-term vision of the school.

### **3.6 Analysis**

The data derived from the questionnaire and observations will be analyzed through content analyses procedures and through comments from open-ended questions. Data will be analysed using literature review to determine the appropriateness of the responses by the respondents. For Kendall et al (1988, p.158) questionnaires are an information gathering that allows system analysts to gather attitudes, beliefs, behaviours from several key people who may be affected by the current and proposed systems. Responses will be recorded in a summary sheet comprised of a column for question numbers, a column for total number of respondents for each question, a column for the number of appropriate responses for each question, a column for the number of inappropriate responses for each question and a column for the number of non responses for each question.

### **3.7 Limitations**

The technique of constructing questions demands close attention. Recipients are usually not eager to respond to questionnaires and their motivation to respond carefully and honestly are low. Data gathered from qualitative research cannot be easily generalised to other school contexts as it is embedded in the context in which it is gathered. Questionnaires are a convenient means of collecting attitudinal and perceptual data but they require that the researcher reduce his/her questions to a set of items that may be too limiting. The go-slow by a certain teacher's union in the district delayed the observation process and this forced the researcher to observe for two weeks. Educators were not that much free during observation. It

became evident to the researcher that the four educators that were observed created their world to impress the researcher and allowed the researcher to know what they chose for her to know. These teachers prepared only the lessons they were to teach when observed by the researcher.

### **3.8 Instruments**

The main methods to be used when collecting data will be questionnaires and the researcher's observation sheet. Questionnaire design will contain both closed and open-ended questions. Schumacher (1993) confirms that a questionnaire is relatively economical, has standardised questions and can ensure anonymity. Closed form items obtain demographic information and data can be categorised easily. During observation the researcher will record her findings in an observation sheet.

### **3.9 Conclusion**

This chapter tried to highlight the nature of the research undertaken at this particular primary school. The questionnaire and observation will be the main research methods used. Analysis of data will be of a qualitative nature.

In the next chapter the researcher will be dealing with the analysis of answers and data gathered from the questionnaires.

## CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter will deal with the presentation analysis and discussion of the data and findings obtained from the questionnaires (Appendix A). Findings will be analysed and discussed in the same order as the questions are arranged in the questionnaire.

#### Analysis of responses to questionnaires

Questionnaires were distributed to 9 educators, 3 Heads of Department (H.O.D), 1 Deputy Principal and a Principal. All of them responded to the questionnaire. The researcher also visited their classrooms to get a sense of what was happening in the Senior Phase classrooms.

#### Question 1: How many learners in your class?

The respondents were invited to tick the letter of alphabet corresponding to the number of learners in their classrooms. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.1

(a) Less than 50	(b) 50	(c) More than 50	(d) 100 and above
0	0	0	14

This shows that educators are teaching in overcrowded classrooms with very big groups of learners. The pupil- teacher ratio of 1:40 is practically impossible for the teachers of this school. It is the view of Johnson et al (1991, p.11) that cooperative learning is the instructional use of small groups so that students work together to maximise their own and each other's learning. Size does matter if the outcomes of participatory methods are to be met. Work should be sociable and fun to reach a fruitful end. It is difficult for learners to work effectively if they are in big groups. There are those who turned to be passengers and those who will work hard for the benefit of the whole group. The smaller the number of group members, the greater the individual contribution and accountability.

**Question 2: How long have you been teaching?**

The respondents were invited to tick the letter of alphabet corresponding to the number of years they have been teaching. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.2

(a) Less than a year	(b) Less than 5 years	(c) 5-10 years	(d) 10 years and over
1	2	4	7

Almost all of them are more than a year in the teaching field. Some of them were in a position to state the kinds of methods that they feel are good for them when implementing Curriculum 2005.

**Question 3: How often did you attend Curriculum 2005 workshops?**

The respondents were invited to tick the appropriate letter of alphabet corresponding to the duration they have attended. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.3

(a) Quarterly	(b) Once a semester	(c) Once a year	(d) Not at all
0	0	12	2

Most of the respondents have last attended a Curriculum 2005 workshop a year ago. During observation periods they stated that what was supposed to be done in a couple of weeks was done in a week's time. This is in line with Jansen (1999) findings that some of the Grade 1 educators felt that the OBE training in the five-day block period is inadequate. This is also the feeling of Senior Phase educators observed by the researcher. They also stated that the lack of support and monitoring by the Subject Advisors was a contributing factor to their failure of not implementing Curriculum 2005.

**Question 4(a): Do you have a Curriculum 2005 policy document?**

The respondents were invited to tick the appropriate box corresponding to whether they have policy documents or not. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.4

Yes	No
3	11

Taylor (1999, p.91) states that the unequal distribution of material resources and quality educators makes a big difference to student learning between learners in under resourced and those in well resourced schools. All the respondents did not have adequate educator support material. Educators need to use a variety of resources in structuring learning so that learners can experience success. This is in line with what Potenza (1999) found with Grade 1 Curriculum 2005 implementation that there was apparently no adequate supply of learning materials in order to implement Curriculum 2005 effectively. The shortage of teaching and learning material resources as well as teacher commitment are one of the things that retard change. The Curriculum 2005 policy document helps teachers to prepare their learning programmes thoroughly as it has specific outcomes as well as assessment criteria to be used in the Senior Phase classrooms. According to Spady (1994, p.11) the clear picture of desired outcomes is the starting point of the curriculum, instruction and assessment planning and implementation of all which must perfectly match. Teachers and learners need to be clear of what is to be done during the teaching and learning process.

**Question 4(b): If yes, how often do you use it?**

The respondents that have ticked the 'Yes' box were to tick the statement corresponding to how often do they use the policy document. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.5

(i) Daily	(ii) Once a week	(iii) Once a month	(iv) Not at all
0	0	0	3



The three respondents indicated that they were not using the policy document when planning their learning programme units. They did not know how to use Curriculum 2005 policy document for the Senior Phase. During observation sessions they also complained that it is full of jargon. It is in line with the findings by Jansen (1999) that some of Grade 1 educators do not understand Curriculum 2005 jargon. What the researcher noticed during observation was that Senior Phase Educators did not have clear Learning Programme Units. Two of the respondents have started implementing RNCS being guided by the higher institutions they are registered with. They knew how to look for the learning outcomes of each learning area but experienced difficulty in designing activities that were relevant to the identified assessment standards.

**Question 5: Do you plan your lessons with other educators?**

In response to this question, the respondents were to tick the appropriate box. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.6

Yes	No
3	11

All the respondents did not have regular meetings since they did not know how to plan using the policy document of 1997. They only met to choose Phase Organizers not to prepare as Grade or Phase educators. Their activities were not guided by the learning outcomes chosen in the policy document but guided by the traditional aims or objectives of the lesson.

**Question 6: In Curriculum 2005, integration of Learning Areas is more strongly stressed than conceptual progression.**

The respondents were to tick the appropriate box corresponding to what they have noticed with Curriculum 2005. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.7

Yes	No
14	0

All the respondents ticked the 'Yes' box and this shows the knowledge they have that the emphasis is on the integration with other Learning Areas in Curriculum 2005. The conceptual progression is not strongly stressed and can be seen in each phase.

**Question 7: Are participative methods the only methods used when implementing Curriculum 2005?**

The respondents were to tick the appropriate box corresponding with what they know about the implementation of Curriculum 2005. The results were as follows:

Table 4:8

Yes	No
12	2

Most of the respondents ticked the 'Yes' box, which indicate that they are only using participative methods when implementing Curriculum 2005. Participative methods focus on the learner playing a central role in teaching. Learning activities should therefore encourage learners to participate fully in all the classroom activities. Jacobs (2003) is also of the view that learners are the ones who take initiatives through the help of a knowledgeable person. He further stated that these methods strengthen the bond between the teacher and the learner and amongst learners themselves.

**Question 8: Teacher centred methods are no longer used in Curriculum 2005**

In response to this question, the respondents were to tick the appropriate box corresponding with what they know about Curriculum 2005. The results were as follows:

Table: 4. 9

Yes	No
10	4

Many respondents ticked the ‘Yes’ box, which shows that they are not using teacher-centred methods. Jacobs (2003) argues that although Curriculum 2005 stresses the use of learner centred methods, the teacher still need to explain the facts, give guided instructions or direction towards intended outcomes, clear misconceptions; add on what learners know, etc. There is still a need for teacher centred methods but to a limited extent. Wilmot et al (2003) stresses that the role of the teacher is pivotal as a facilitator of learning and creator of reach and stimulating learning environment where learners work together to explore issues that affect them.

**Question 9: Are your learners always working in groups?**

The respondents were to tick the appropriate letter of alphabet corresponding with what they do in their classrooms. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.10

(a) Almost Never	(b) Sometimes	(c) Often	(d) Very Often
0	2	4	8

Most of the respondents ticked ‘very often’ which show that group work activities are commonly done. Individual and peer activities are very important in showing what the learner can be able to do independently. These activities need to be promoted so as to identify barriers to learning experienced by each individual and to plan for remedial purposes. Sometimes group work encourages other learners to become passive but in peer and individual activities every learner is actively involved.

**Question 10: How often do you give homework activities to your learners?**

In response to this question, the respondents were to tick the appropriate letter of alphabet that corresponds with how often they give home-work activities to their learners. The results were as follows:

Table 4.11

(a) Almost never	(b) Sometimes	(c) Often	(d) Very often
0	11	3	0

Most of the respondents ticked 'sometimes' which shows that they give home-work activities to the learners. Even though they are given home work, learners did not get support at home because of a variety of reasons like, some parents lack skills in guiding their learners when they are doing home work activities and others are unable to read and write.

**Question 11: In Curriculum 2005 assessment is done at the beginning of the lesson, during the lesson, after the lesson or at all the stages of the lesson.**

The respondents were to tick the appropriate letter that corresponds with what they know about assessing an assessment activity. The results were as follows:

Table 4.12

Beginning	During	After	At all stages
0	0	0	14

All the respondents ticked 'at all stages of the lesson' which shows that they assess whilst teaching rather than assessing at the end of the lesson only. They treat assessment as a process rather than a once off event. Baseline assessment helps teachers to establish prior learning and to plan learning activities. Formative assessment is a continuous process that forms and shapes teaching and learning. It uses constructive feedback to help learners grow. Summative assessment gives an overall picture of learner's progress at a given time.

**Question 12: What do you assess?**

In response to this question, the respondents were to tick the appropriate letter of alphabet corresponding with what they assess. The results were as follows:

Table: 4.13

(a) Knowledge	(b) Skills	(c) Values and attitudes	(d) All of the above
0	2	0	12

In response to this question most respondents ticked 'all of the above' which indicate that they do not assess knowledge only but also take into consideration skills, values and attitudes.

**Question 13: What assessment tools do you use when assessing?**

The respondents were required to give different kinds of assessment tools they use when assessing their learners. The respondents came up with the following assessment tools.

- Rubrics (8)
- Checklists (7)
- Observation sheets (5)
- Marking Memoranda (10)
- Rating scales (3)

These are the different kinds of assessment tools that can be used by teachers when collecting evidence of learning (Department of Education, 1998). What the researcher observed in this regard was that the common tools the educators use almost in all the activities are memoranda. They complain that they have a difficulty in describing the levels of each criterion. The respondents should know that a rubric consists of criteria and levels of performance from which each level has clear descriptors against each criterion. A checklist is useful when assessing products against a list of criteria. Observation sheets are used when observing what learners are doing and how they are behaving in an activity. Marking memoranda sets model

answers against which learner's work is assessed and the rating scales allow teachers to assess and record the level of achievement quickly and accurately.

**Question 14: What do you do with the information you have gathered during assessment?**

In response to this question, the respondents were required to state what they do with the information they gathered during learner assessment. They came up with the following responses.

- Report progress of the learner to parents, other educators, and the principal as well as to the learner himself/herself. (10)
- Helps them when planning for new lessons. (4)
- Use information for remedial purposes. (2)
- Record it for future use (3)

It became evident from these responses that the information gathered help the respondents to plan for new lessons and it informs them of the learner's strength as well as areas that may need support. This is the knowledge the respondents have about what can be done with the gathered information. Application of this knowledge into practice is not evident since there were no lesson plans and assessment plans in place as evidence of planning. They also claim that formal meetings with parents to report about learners' progress are arranged though there were no evidence such as minutes of the meeting with the parents concerned or attendance register. Reports cards are used for formal summative reporting to parents though in some instances.

**Question 15: What are your feelings about curriculum 2005?**

The respondents were required to state their feelings about Curriculum 2005. They responded as follows.

- There should be some kind of content in each learning area.
- Too much work to be done
- Workshops took shorter period with a lot of new information to be learnt.
- No monitoring and support after the workshops

- Not easy to identify learners with barriers to learning as they work with big groups of learners.
- Curriculum 2005 would work in classrooms with smaller numbers of learners and adequate resources.
- Specific outcomes that define what learners should master often indicate behaviours and beliefs that are vaguely worded.
- Most learners are struggling with reading, writing and the language of learning and teaching which is English in their case.

The respondents were of the opinion that a lot of information which is supposed to be dealt with over time is dealt with in a short period of time. There should be follow up visits by district officials to see to it whether what was done in the workshops is being implemented and also to give support when necessary. They also complained about too much work done by those who teach more than one learning area since they need to plan at macro, meso and micro levels; above that, they are still struggling to understand the language used in the Curriculum 2005 policy document. Further more, they stated the content to be taught is not clearly stated in this document and this makes it difficult to identify the levels at which each specific outcome can be achieved in each grade. Moreover, they complained about overcrowded classrooms which make it difficult to assign group work as well as the shortage of resources. Finally, the language of teaching and learning which is English in this case is a barrier since it limits learners when sharing their ideas and most learners cannot read and write accurately.

#### **Question 16: What assessment methods do you use when assessing learner performance?**

Most of the respondents were using teacher assessment. This showed that most of the Senior Phase educators were not using a variety of assessment methods when assessing as advocated by Outcomes Based Education. Following is the discussion of various methods of assessment that can be used to collect evidence. Self-assessment helps the learner to become responsible and recognize the limitations of his/her work. It is when learners are given the criteria for assessment before embarking on a task and are asked to reflect on what they have learned using the criteria provided. It gives a learner an opportunity to improve on performance in any activity and helps teachers to give more meaningful feedback. Peer assessment gives learners the opportunity to evaluate their own and their peer's performance. In group assessment,

learners can assess their abilities to work co-operatively, to complete the task competently and to work within a given time frame or can assess another group's performance (Department of Education, 2004). Portfolio assessment is an effective way of documenting a learner's progress. Educators need to use various methods when assessing their learners and to know that assessment activities can be formal or informal.

#### **4.3 OVERVIEW OF THE FINDINGS**

The main findings of this research exhibited that Senior Phase educators of the school in question do not work collaboratively; they do not plan as grade or phase teachers and do not have learning programmes. Curriculum 2005 workshops are conducted once a year and there is no monitoring and support by the district officials after the workshops. They are not using Curriculum 2005 policy documents when preparing their lessons or planning for classroom activities. They are not competent in designing their assessment tools even though they assess their learners. Classrooms are overcrowded which make it difficult to do individual attention. Methods that are commonly used are discussion and problem-solving methods. Activities are always done in big groups. They rarely give home work.

#### **4.4: CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the findings and responses from the questionnaire and through observation were presented and discussed with a view to unfold their meaning. In the chapter that follows the main findings will be presented and that analysed; followed by recommendations based on the findings of the study.



## **CHAPTER 5: SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **5.1 Introduction**

In this chapter the presentation and findings of the questionnaire will be followed by the recommendations that can be of great importance to the Senior Phase educators of this school.

### **5.2 Summary of the main findings**

This study was an attempt to investigate how the senior phase educators of this school understand and implement Curriculum 2005 by taking into consideration the principles that underpin the new curriculum. This study also attempted to find out the methods of teaching and assessment used by these teachers when implementing Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms. Questionnaires and observation methods were used to gather information. The main findings of the research will now be summarised according to the research questions.

Question 1 of the study focused on the principles underpinning Curriculum 2005 and how teachers understand and implement curriculum 2005 theories into practice. This question was explored extensively in the literature review which identified principles underpinning the curriculum as learner centeredness; relevance and integration; differentiation; redress and learner support; nation- building and non-discrimination; critical and creative thinking; flexibility; progression and credibility.

The knowledge and understanding of these principles by senior phase educators of this school will have an effect on the development of learning programmes, the planning of the learning activities and assessment. Moreover through the knowledge of these principles Senior Phase teachers will also teach the content in context taking into consideration relevance, integration and content progression from grade to grade. The respondents did not have a clear understanding of the theories underpinning Curriculum 2005 although learners were given opportunities to discover things for themselves. The knowledge and understanding of these theories will have an impact on the planning of teaching and learning activities and the assessment of the learning outcomes. Learners will be actively involved taking responsibility of their own learning. Learning will be seen as an active process and a social activity in which the learner constructs meaning. Teachers will also adjust learning tasks to fall within the Zone

of Proximal Development, that is, the level of understanding that is possible when a learner works with the help of a knowledgeable person. They will also know that learners need to be guided until they are able to solve problems without the teacher's assistance (scaffolding). A lack of Curriculum 2005 understanding by The School Management Team created a situation where teachers did as they wish paying little or no attention to curriculum principles, theories and policies.

Question 2 aimed to examine teachers' understanding of the new curriculum and how they implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms. The teachers' understanding of Curriculum 2005 was determined through the questionnaire and the manner in which they implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms was determined through observation. The starting point for implementing Curriculum 2005 is to know the destination first so as to direct and help learners to arrive at the destination. The failure to prepare learning programmes and lesson plans was evident since the respondents did not use the few Curriculum 2005 policy documents available at school to reach the outcomes. This really shows the lack of teacher commitment to their work as well as poor management by the School Management Team.

What was evident was that educators knew that specific outcomes are to be identified before designing an activity so as to work towards achieving them. Identification of specific outcomes before the activity was not evident since there were no lesson plans in place and no clear recordings of the specific outcomes that were addressed as well as assessed. Learners need to be actively involved in learning and to be encouraged to work in groups, pairs and as individuals. Due to large numbers in each classroom, the respondents experience hard time when learners are working in groups because very few learners participate in big groups whilst others tend to be passive. Nevertheless, they grouped their learners to promote group-work having the understanding that knowledge is socially constructed although this does not work effectively especially when learners are to communicate in English (refer to question 1,6,10 & 16). Learners were also given individual activities and pair- work in some instances. These activities enable learners to be actively involved. Formative assessment was not evident although the respondents knew that they were to continuously assess skills, knowledge, values and attitudes. There were very few tasks that were assessed as evidence which appeared in the portfolios (refer to questions 12 & 13).

Moreover they considered the prior knowledge of the learners when teaching and the activities were simplified so that learners accomplish or achieve the specific outcomes. Learners were not frequently given homework activities, (refer to question 11). Although Senior Phase teachers have some knowledge about Curriculum 2005, they were not implementing it into practise. Learning programmes were not in place. It was also evident that some of the Senior Phase teachers were teaching learning areas they were not trained for such as Arts & Culture, Life Orientation as well as Economic and Management Sciences. If in Curriculum 2005 teachers design their own content it will be impossible for these respondents to design their own content in the learning areas they were not trained for and will also struggle with conceptual progression. Attending Curriculum 2005 workshops once a year and the lack of monitoring and support by the Subject Advisors contributed to the lack of implementation of Curriculum 2005.

Question 3 attempted to identify the methods used by teachers in teaching and assessing their learners in terms of Curriculum 2005. The data on the methods used by Senior Phase teachers was collected through questionnaires and through observation. It became evident that teachers are using various methods ranging from learner-centred to teacher-centred methods depending on the type of activity to be done. Although they used learner-centred methods very often, they had to explain facts, give guided instruction, clear misconceptions and to add new information on what learners know, (refer to questions 8, 9, & 17). The methods that were commonly used were discussion, problem solving and the telling methods. This question was also explored through a literature review. Amongst the methods discussed were co-operative learning, problem solving, discussion, project, role-play, experimental, question and answer and demonstration methods. Wilmot (2003, pp.4 & 18) claims that in co-operative learning learners are assigned to small groups and are taught to learn the assigned material and to make sure that other members of the group learn the assigned material. Learners are required to work collaboratively with others, to share and discuss the learning material helping each other to make sense of it and to encourage one another to work hard so that the group succeed. Co-operative learning became very difficult to happen in this school because of overcrowded classrooms, (refer to question 1). Problem solving allows learners to discover things for themselves and to engage in solving problems. In discussion method a learner makes contact with others and establishes a relationship with reality. Problem solving and discussion methods were used in this school. According to Jacobs et al (2003, p.231) learners participate in a project designed by the teacher or themselves. Learners in this school participated in projects

given by the teacher. The telling method as one of the teacher centred methods is used in adding new information and to clear misunderstandings (Jacobs et al, 2003). The Senior Phase educators of this school used this method very often stating that is the best method when teaching in over crowded classrooms. Senior Phase teachers also used a variety of assessment methods such as group assessment, peer assessment, self-assessment as well as educator assessment, (refer to questions 8, 9, & 17). Yet the records of assessment tasks were not properly recorded and sometimes not done at all.

### **5.3 Recommendations**

Based on the analysis of data that was collected from the respondents and observation that was carried out in Senior Phase classrooms of this school, the following recommendations are suggested.

- Teachers need to know and understand that cooperative approach to learning is more than putting learners in groups and tell them to work. It is characterised by a common goal that must be reached with the effort of all the members of the group. The small number of group members will lead to greater individual contribution and accountability.
- Senior Phase teachers of this school need to plan the learning programmes and learning activities in order to set the learning agenda through using Curriculum 2005 policy documents.
- They need to understand that Specific Outcomes must be used to guide classroom methodology and content selection. These Specific Outcomes will enable the teachers and learners to keep in mind the broader goal to which they are working. Senior phase teachers need to use the Range Statements to indicate the depth and level of complexity that a learner must achieve within the senior phase.
- When planning and preparing lessons, they need to select methods that give room for maximum participation by giving learners interesting activities such as role plays, investigations, debates taking into consideration the level of complexity. Moreover, lesson planning makes teaching purposeful and systematic whilst allowing learners to be responsible for their own learning.
- Team teaching should to be promoted in this school so that teachers plan and work together. Sharing of experiences and reflections on their practise will help Senior Phase teachers to improve in their practise.

- Learners should be given real problems to solve such as investigations where they investigate a real problem, process data and apply ideas to real situations. A well-designed activity will allow strong learners to show how much they can do and will indicate where weaker learners are having difficulties.
- A starting point for any lesson should be to know learners' prior knowledge and then from there teachers build lesson activities that aim at attaining the desired outcome.
- Teachers must create a positive learning environment in which students are helped in their learning and must provide learners with sufficient opportunities to new knowledge and skills.
- All learning should be placed in context to help learners to apply what they have learnt in the classroom to real life situations.
- Teachers also need to engage their learners in problem solving activities. These activities enable learners to become independent, good problem identifiers, organizers, planners and effective thinkers. They become eager to solve more problems once they acquire problem-solving skills. Learners' output is an interesting indicator of thinking and learning and can be evident in their work that must be assessed by educators.
- Although it will be practically impossible to provide different learning programmes for every learner, formative assessment can help teachers to guide the programme to meet the key needs. Formative assessment needs to happen continuously throughout the learning process helping learners to determine their own needs and recognise their own strengths.
- If the Senior Phase teachers make use of the Curriculum 2005 policy document when planning, they will see that Performance Indicators provide teachers with a clear means of assessing learners and assessment criteria indicate what a learner must demonstrate in order to show that they have met the requirements of a specific outcome. Senior Phase teachers need to know that assessment is focusing on helping learners to achieve competence. If this is the case it needs to be integrated with teaching and learning activities.
- Assessment must aim at encouraging and challenging improvement as well as progress and should be matched with learning outcomes. Assessment must be an ongoing process taking into consideration skills, knowledge, values and attitudes.
- In addition, Senior Phase teachers need to keep a continuous record of the learner progress to use it as evidence in deciding how well their learners are learning and to

decide whether the teaching methods being used are working well or need to be adapted.

- The School Management Team should be central in the implementation of Curriculum 2005 at this school. They should lead by example through attending Curriculum 2005 workshops, implementing the curriculum and be in a position to support teachers. If they do not attend the workshops and do not keep abreast with new changes through professional development, they will not be in a position to monitor and support the teachers they are managing.
- The District Officials or Subject Advisors must conduct Curriculum 2005 and assessment workshops regularly and must also monitor and support senior phase teachers so as to see that these teachers implement Curriculum 2005 accordingly. District Officials to see to it that Curriculum 2005 workshops are not too general as this deprive teachers the chance to air their feelings for the fear of exposing their lack of understanding. Common tasks for assessment need to be administered in all the grades in the Senior Phase and to be supervised by the District Officials.
- Homework activities should be given regularly. Outcomes Based Education promotes activity based learning, which makes homework more important than it has been. Teachers need to plan what learners should do as homework and to plan how they will assess it.

## **5.4 Conclusion**

From this research it has become evident that Senior Phase teachers of a particular senior secondary school in Lusikisiki District, Eastern Cape do not implement Curriculum 2005 in their classrooms although they have some knowledge about the new curriculum. They do not have learning programmes and have ceased to prepare lesson plans using the policy document. Some were preparing the lessons using the traditional method. In order to establish the methods commonly used by these educators, the researcher observed them teaching, studied their lesson plans and held discussions with them. Some of the findings by Jansen (1999) like overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, lack of monitoring and support, still exist. What discouraged them was the lack of support and monitoring even at school level by School Management Team, insufficient Curriculum 2005 orientation as well as teaching in overcrowded classrooms.

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## QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a questionnaire geared at collecting and gauging information about how Senior Phase Educators implement Curriculum 2005 in their school classrooms. It is not aimed at ridiculing or undermining anybody's integrity but to assist me towards my studies in the implementation of Curriculum 2005. Everybody involved should feel free and be assured that his/her responses shall be treated with utmost confidentiality. Should there be any one who wishes to add any information not covered in this questionnaire, one should be at liberty to do this at the end.

1. How many learners in your class?

*(Please tick your response)*

- a) Less than 50
- b) 50
- c) More than 50
- d) 100 and above

2. How long have you been teaching?

*(Please tick your response)*

- a) Less than a year
- b) Less than 5 years
- c) Between 5 years and 10 years
- d) 10 years and above

3. How often did you attend Curriculum 2005 workshops?

*(Please tick your response)*

- a) Quarterly
- b) Once a semester
- c) Once a year
- d) Not at all

4. (a) Do you have a Curriculum 2005 policy document?

*(Please tick your response)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

(b) If yes, how often do you use it?

*(Please tick your response)*

i. Daily

ii. Once a week

iii. Once a month

iv. Not at all

5. Do you plan your lessons with other educators?

*(Please tick the appropriate box)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

6. In Curriculum 2005, integration of Learning Areas is more strongly stressed than conceptual progression.

*(Please tick the appropriate box)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Are participative methods are the only methods used when implementing Curriculum 2005? *(Please tick the appropriate box)*

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Teacher centered methods are no longer used in Curriculum 2005.

*(Please tick the appropriate box)*

☐

Yes

☐

No

9. Are your learners always working in groups?

*(Please tick the appropriate letter)*

- a) Almost never
- b) Sometimes
- c) Often
- d) Very Often

10. How often do you give home-work activities to your learners?

*(Please tick the appropriate letter)*

- a) Almost never
- b) Sometimes
- c) Often
- d) Very Often

11. In Curriculum 2005, assessment is done at the beginning of the lesson, during the lesson, after the lesson or at all the stages of the lesson.

*(Please tick the appropriate letter)*

- (a) Beginning
- (b) During
- (c) After
- (d) At all stages

12. What do you assess?

*(Please tick the appropriate box)*

- (a) Knowledge
- (b) Skills
- (c) Values and attitudes
- (d) All of the above

